

## Juniper (*Juniperus communis nana*)

Juniper is one of three native species of conifer in Britain. It is divided into at least two sub-species with frequent intermediates. Sub-species *communis* ranges from a spreading shrub to an erect tree; it is regarded as a successional shrub, opportunistic in its pattern of establishment and quickly shaded out as other scrub develops. Sub-species *nana* is a procumbent, matted shrub which is largely restricted to moorland and high level crags.

Juniper may occur in a number of UKBAP Priority Habitats, in particular upland and lowland heathland, lowland calcareous grassland, broadleaf woodland, upland birchwood and maritime cliffs and slopes. Juniper scrub is recognised as a nationally scarce habitat type.

### Current status

#### National status

Juniper has an extensive, but rather discontinuous, range in England. Its distribution is limited to the acid soils in the north (in particular the Lake District, Durham, Northumbria, south Cumbria, the limestone around Morecambe Bay) and the chalk of southern England. Juniper is a UKBAP Priority Species. Whilst it receives the general protection from picking, uprooting etc afforded to all wild plants under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, it is not specially protected under Schedule 8.

"*Juniperus communis* formations on calcareous heaths or grasslands" is listed on Annex I of the EC Habitats and Species Directive, and there are a number of candidate SAC sites for this habitat in England.

#### Status on the network

Juniper is known to occur on verges of the A34, A36 and M3 though it is likely to be under-recorded on the network. Where appropriate, road verge management should take account of the requirements of Juniper and suitable habitat should be enhanced and extended on the soft estate.

### Current factors affecting the species

#### Inappropriate management

Excessive grazing/mowing prevents the establishment of young bushes, but insufficient grazing/mowing reduces the area suitable for Juniper regeneration. Excessive burning may destroy young regeneration and adult bushes. Uncontrolled deer browsing may prevent new tree and shrub growth.

#### Clearance of stands

New road developments, road widening schemes, improvements and repair works may lead to the loss of and/or damage to shrubs close to or on the road verge.

### Current action

Many Juniper populations are considered to be of national or county importance for nature conservation and have received formal designation. There is currently a programme of survey and identification of sites which is due to be completed by 2005.

Areas of verge on the M3 between Bar End and Compton have recently been planted with Juniper.

The TRMM indicates that verges that have nature conservation value should be managed to conserve and enhance this value. Advice on the creation, translocation and management of scrub habitat on road verges is provided in the DMRB.



## Objectives

To maintain and enhance the nature conservation value of the habitats found on road verges and adjacent areas that support Juniper.

	Objective	Proposed actions
<b>A</b>	To identify areas of the soft estate that support populations of Juniper.	2, 3, 4
<b>B</b>	To avoid where possible and to mitigate unavoidable impacts on Juniper associated with new roads or road improvement schemes.	6, 7
<b>C</b>	To ensure that all stands of Juniper that have been designated as sites of nature conservation value are managed appropriately.	5, 8, 9
<b>D</b>	To raise awareness of HA staff, Managing Agents and consultants regarding the importance of Juniper on the network.	1, 10, 11
<b>E</b>	To restore /re-establish Juniper populations at sites not currently under conservation management.	3, 4, 8, 9

## Proposed action

The following table lists the actions required to achieve the objectives set out in this Plan. For some of the actions, potential partners have

been assigned as likely sources of cooperation. Targets are provided to give an indication of the timescale for the proposed action.

	Action	Potential partners	Target
	<i>Policy, guidance and advice</i>		
<b>1</b>	Provide detailed information in TRMM on the management of the soft estate for the benefit of Juniper scrub.	-	2004
	<i>Surveying</i>		
<b>2</b>	Ensure that all Juniper scrub within the soft estate is mapped. Include all records on the HA Environmental Database.	EN	2005
<b>3</b>	Identify all areas where Juniper planting could be undertaken at former and new sites to contribute to habitat biodiversity and to replace unavoidable losses of existing populations.	-	2007
<b>4</b>	Assess the condition and age structure of all stands of Juniper on the network.	-	2007

	<b>Action (continued)</b>	<b>Potential partners</b>	<b>Target</b>
	<i>Research and monitoring</i>		
<b>5</b>	Monitor all sites where Juniper enhancement has taken place (e.g. on the M3 between Bar End and Compton) as part of ongoing maintenance.	-	<b>Ongoing</b>
	<i>Mitigation and Management</i>		
<b>6</b>	Ensure that valuable Juniper stands, in particular designated sites, are taken into account when designing new roads/road widening schemes. Where at all possible, avoid direct impacts.	-	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>7</b>	Where loss of Juniper stands is unavoidable, consider re-creation or translocation within the road scheme, particularly in areas adjacent to existing populations.	-	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>8</b>	Develop specific management statements for plots containing Juniper shrubs to include selective cutting to mimic the traditional harvesting and creation of patches of bare ground to encourage new plant establishment.	-	<b>2005</b>
<b>9</b>	Undertake planting and management of Juniper required to extend the area of Juniper habitat both on existing roads and on new schemes, where appropriate. This includes M3 Bar End to Compton, Hampshire and the A36 Pepperbox Hill, Wiltshire.	-	<b>40 sites by 2012</b>
	<i>Communications and publicity</i>		
<b>10</b>	Raise awareness within the HA of the value of Juniper, for example through the use of internal publications, in particular in areas 2 and 3 where this species is known to occur on the network.	-	<b>2003</b>
<b>11</b>	Ensure that HA staff members involved in road verge management are aware of the HABAP, of any updating of TRMM and best practice with regard to management of Juniper scrub.	-	<b>2005</b>

#### **Links with other plans**

This plan should be read in conjunction with the HAPs for heathland and calcareous grassland.

Juniper is listed as a Priority species within the LBAPs for Cumbria and Gloucestershire.

#### **Lead partner**

The lead partner for Juniper in the UKBAP is Plantlife.

